

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Anthony Kyem
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is owned and operated by a private company. The home is registered to care for one young person who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties or a learning disability.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: a service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements

Good: a service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements

Adequate: a service that only meets minimum requirements

Inadequate: a service that does not meet minimum requirements

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **good**.

Young people make good progress in relation to their individual starting points across all aspects of their welfare including their physical, social, intellectual, emotional and behavioural development. Young people have good relationships with staff and they sustain their positive attachments. Young people's views about their care and their relationships with staff, are exceptionally positive.

Young people feelings, views and opinions are taken seriously. Young people are involved in key decisions about the running of the home and are able to make a good contribution. They are respected, involved and listened to. Young people say they feel safe living at the home and they have a strong sense of personal safety.

Young people benefit from a home that is managed efficiently and effectively. The manager exercises effective leadership of the home, which promotes the smooth day-to-day running of the home. The manager has a positive understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and they take action to secure improvement, where necessary. As a result, the standard and quality of young people's care is improving and monitored effectively.

There are no breaches of regulations. As a result of this inspection, a small number of recommendations are made. These relate to: minor improvements to health and safety; improved consultation with young people; and affording young people access to a computer and the internet.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure risk assessments of the whole children's home environment are carried out to identify any potential sources of harm. This relates specifically to fitting a suitable carbon monoxide detector (NMS 10.8)
- ensure young people develop their emotional, intellectual, social creative and physical skills through the accessible and stimulating environment created by the home. Children are supported to take part in school based and out of school activities. This relates specifically to young people having access to a personal computer and access to the internet (NMS 7.1)
- ensure young people communicate their views on all aspects of their care and support (NMS 1.3)

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **good**.

Young people benefit from services to promote their physical, emotional and psychological well-being. Young people have prompt access to a doctor, dentist and optician and specialist services, when they require them. There are positive arrangements made to promote young people's good health and their well-being. Young people are taught about key health issues so they understand the benefits and importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Young people make positive lifestyle decisions and they take responsibility for their own personal health. Risk taking activities, such as alcohol misuse, sexual health risks and drug taking have decreased considerably. One young person said: 'I've stopped using drugs and that's a massive thing for me...I've started to take things on board. A year ago, I would never have thought that.'

Young people are actively encouraged to attend school or alternative educational provision. Their school attendance has improved significantly. The educational achievement of young people is good, taking into account both their attainment and progress in relation to their individual starting points. Young people's punctuality requires improvement and this is something that staff are aware of and are working on.

Young people make good progress in developing a positive self-view. They develop greater self-confidence and emotional resilience so they are better equipped to cope with life's challenges and overcome them. Staff support young people to make sense of their past experiences and help them move forward and plan for the future. Young people benefit from regular contact with their families so they maintain positive relationships with the people who are most important to them.

Young people develop their independence skills in shopping, cleaning and cooking. They are allowed to take appropriate risks as part of their growth and natural development. Young people are encouraged to make a positive contribution to the home and the wider community. Staff encourage young people to make appropriate and positive peer relationships.

Quality of care

The quality of the care is **good**.

Young people's views about their care and their relationships with staff are exceptionally positive. Young people have positive role models in staff, who they look up to and learn from.

One young person said: 'I get loads of attention and stuff...My favourite is (staff) she's lovely and so motherly. They're all good and they help me and do what they can for me...everything's improved for me. I've stopped absconding, never done it since I've been here.'

Young people benefit from well planned, highly personalised care that promotes their needs effectively. Their needs arising from their personal identity, culture, gender, race and diversity are all addressed well in daily living and care planning. It is clear from discussions with young people that they are involved in their plans and understand them. However, their views are not always being recorded on their plans.

Young people enjoy attending the gym and going swimming in their free time. They are positively encouraged to develop interests and hobbies. However, young people do not have access to a personal computer or use of the internet. Consequently, they cannot engage with the wider social community in a similar way to their peers.

There have been no complaints since the previous inspection. Young people know how to make a complaint and their rights are promoted effectively. Young people are consulted and they feel that their views, wishes and feelings are acted on and they can influence the running of the home. Young people have weekly meetings and key work sessions to promote their participation in key decisions. For example, they have influenced the home's decoration and negotiated their own incentives and rewards. However, there are some aspects of consultation with young people that could be improved. For example, weekly meetings and key work records do not consistently reflect the feelings, views and opinions of young people.

Safeguarding children and young people

The service is **good** at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

Staff place the safety and welfare of young people at the centre of their practice. As a result young people feel safe and have a strong sense of personal safety. Young people are protected from abuse and all other forms of significant harm, including child sexual exploitation. Visitors to the home are carefully chaperoned and there is

suitable monitoring of such people. Staff employed are selected and vetted carefully. Staff are trained in child protection so they know to deal with allegations and report suspected abuse.

Young people have made positive progress across all aspects of their behaviour and welfare. Risk taking behaviours have been minimised and these have reduced significantly. Young people rarely go missing from care and if they do, staff take prompt action to promote their safe return. The use of clear risk assessments, management and safe working practice ensure young people receive effective support and protection. The home maintains positive partnerships with the local police and other professional agencies to promote young people's safety.

Young people's positive behaviour is promoted and there is good use of targeted incentives and rewards. Young people respond well to the care and support provided to them. Staff adopt a non-punitive approach and they work positively with young people. Staff share and implement the home's ethos, approach and philosophy, in caring for young people. They are trained in behaviour management so they know how to manage young people's behaviours safely and effectively. The use of sanctions and restraint are kept to an absolute minimum. There have been no restraints or sanctions since the previous inspection.

The home provides young people with good quality, comfortable and homely accommodation. The home has recently been redecorated. Young people's private living accommodation is highly personalised in accordance with their needs and wishes. The accommodation provided for young people is physically safe and appropriately secure. All health and safety matters are addressed effectively and this includes the arrangements made to promote fire safety.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the children's home are **good**.

Young people benefit from a home that is managed effectively and efficiently. The registered manager exercises strong and effective leadership of the home's staff and operation. They motivate staff well, are enthusiastic, and they channel their efforts effectively. The manager ensures the home is run in a way that supports and promotes the best outcomes for young people. Care planning and practice is highly individualised to meet the needs of individual young people.

The manager monitors the progress young people make and the effectiveness of the service. They routinely scrutinise the home's administration to identify any patterns and trends. This enables them to understand the home's strengths and weaknesses and take action to secure improvement, where necessary. Combined with independent monitoring visits, the home's overall performance is monitored effectively.

The home can demonstrate its capacity for continuing improvement based on its track record. Requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection have

been addressed. Staff provide a more consistent approach in how they manage young people's behaviours. Young people are now engaged in education and they make positive educational progress as a result. The home has been completely redecorated and the physical environment is now maintained to a high standard. Health and safety checks, including gas and portable electrical appliances, are now kept up to date. However, a carbon monoxide detector is not in place.

The home delivers good quality care for young people. The home can demonstrate the positive difference it has made to young people's lives and can show how their outcomes have improved over time. The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose. The Statement has been reviewed and now includes accurate details of staff's relevant qualifications and experience. Information is accessible to young people and their placing authorities so they know and are clear about what services and facilities the home provides for young people.

Staff benefit from good quality training to develop their skills, knowledge and experience. Most staff are qualified and those that are not, are in the process of achieving an appropriate qualification. The home is adequately resourced and there are sufficient staff employed to meet the diverse needs of the young people. Significant events relating the safety of young people are notified to the appropriate authorities promptly to ensure appropriate action is taken, if needed. There have been no significant events since the previous inspection.

About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the *Inspections of children's homes – framework for inspection* and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of children's homes.